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NINTH DEFENDANT IN MULTI-DISTRICT PUBLIC CORRUPTION PROBE PLEADS GUILTY TO MAIL AND WIRE FRAUD

WASHINGTON – Alice Fisher, Assistant Attorney General for the Criminal Division of the U.S. Department of Justice, today announced that Floyd Gary Thacker, 50, of Atlanta, pleaded guilty to one count of conspiracy to engage in honest services mail and wire fraud before U.S. District Judge David Hittner in the Southern District of Texas. He is the owner of Thacker Operating Company, an Atlanta-based construction and building services company, which provided energy-related services for municipal governments in Houston and Atlanta.

In his guilty plea, Thacker admitted that he established personal relationships with public officials in Atlanta and the former Director of Building Services in Houston by making secret cash payments, gifts, and meals in exchange for favorable treatment for the award of city contracts to Thacker's business.

Between December 1998 and July 2000, Thacker provided Atlanta public officials with secret cash payments, meals, entertainment and trips totaling over \$55,000, in exchange for favorable influence for Thacker's company seeking to do business in Atlanta. Between June and December 2002, Thacker established a similar relationship with Monique McGilbra, former director of Building Services for the City of Houston, and provided her with cash, gifts, meals and trips in hopes of obtaining contracts with the city. In April 2003, Thacker signed a master agreement with the City of Houston for his company to provide energy services to Houston.

Thacker faces a maximum penalty of up to five years in prison, a three-year term of supervised release, and a fine of \$250,000. Judge Hittner scheduled Thacker's sentencing for April 18, 2006.

This case is one of several stemming from a multi-district probe of public corruption by city officials relating to contracting services in Atlanta, Cleveland, East Cleveland (Ohio), Houston and New Orleans being conducted by the Public Integrity Section of the U.S. Department of Justice, and the U.S. Attorneys' Offices in Cleveland and Houston.

Others convicted in the case include:

- Monique McGilbra, 41, of Houston, who was charged and convicted of conspiracies to commit honest services mail and wire fraud last May in both Cleveland and Houston, including the conspiracy with Thacker. A Cleveland judge sentenced McGilbra to three-years imprisonment and fined her \$5,000. In September 2005, McGilbra was sentenced in federal court in Houston to 30-months imprisonment to run concurrently with the three-year term imposed in Cleveland. McGilbra cooperated with the government's prosecution of others.

- Oliver Spellman, 51, former chief of staff to the former mayor of Houston, was sentenced to two-years probation and a \$10,000 fine following his guilty plea to honest services mail and wire fraud conspiracy charges in Cleveland. Spellman cooperated with the government's prosecution of others.
- Gilbert Jackson, 51, of New Orleans, was sentenced to 82-months imprisonment Dec. 12, 2005, following his convictions in Cleveland for racketeering and conspiracy to commit honest services mail and wire fraud violations. Jackson was also ordered to pay \$100,000 restitution to the City of Cleveland. On Jan. 4, 2006, Jackson pleaded guilty to one count of tax evasion in the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Louisiana and could face an additional five-years imprisonment for this conviction.
- Cleveland businessman Nate Gray, 47, was sentenced to 15-years imprisonment Nov. 16, 2005, and ordered to pay \$1.5 million in restitution to the Internal Revenue Service for corruption and tax charges following his conviction in August 2005 in Cleveland.
- Brent Jividen, 43, a former employee of Honeywell Corporation was sentenced to 30-months imprisonment following his guilty plea in Cleveland to racketeering conspiracy charges relating to honest services wire and mail fraud. Jividen cooperated in the government's prosecution of others.
- Emmanuel Onunwor, 47, former mayor of East Cleveland (Ohio), was sentenced to 108-months imprisonment and ordered to pay restitution to the City of East Cleveland of more than \$5.1 million. Onunwor was convicted in Cleveland of racketeering conspiracy and other charges related to his corrupt activities with Cleveland businessman, Nate Gray. Following his conviction at trial in Cleveland, Onunwor cooperated with the government.
- Ricardo Teamor, 59, a former attorney, was sentenced to four-months imprisonment and fined \$15,000 following his guilty plea in Cleveland to corruption charges. Teamor cooperated in the government's prosecution of others.
- Joseph T. Jones, 37, former Cleveland city councilman, was sentenced to two-years probation following his guilty plea in Cleveland to honest services fraud involving Teamor and Gray. As part of his plea agreement, he resigned from the city council. Jones cooperated in the government's prosecution of others.

The cases in Houston are being prosecuted by Trial Attorneys Mary K. Butler and James A. Crowell IV of the U.S. Department of Justice, Criminal Division, Public Integrity Section, headed by Section Chief Noel L. Hillman; and by Assistant U.S. Attorney Edward F. Gallagher in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Houston. The cases in Cleveland are being prosecuted by Butler and Assistant U.S. Attorneys Benita Y. Pearson and Steven M. Dettelbach in the U.S. Attorney's Office in Cleveland. The cases in New Orleans are being prosecuted by Butler and Crowell.

These cases are being investigated by the Federal Bureau of Investigation in Cleveland, Houston and Atlanta, and the IRS Criminal Division in New Orleans and Cleveland.